

## **Regional Transportation Plan Examines Transportation Needs and Educates Citizens**

Sixteen miles north of the Mendocino/Sonoma County boundary on State Highway I is the small City of Point Arena.

Initial data gathered and a community forum held in December, 2000, highlighted transportation as a key problem in the area. While the Mendocino Transit Authority (MTA), offers daily round-trips to Ukiah, Fort Bragg, and Santa Rosa, most residents who live on the coast must rely on the private automobile to go to work, daycare, shopping, entertainment, and other local activities outside of their homes. Seniors and low-income residents especially suffer from the lack of transportation alternatives. Similarly, families find there are no transportation alternatives for their children to use to visit their friends, work in part-time jobs, or engage in after-school activities.

While some transportation planning documents have been developed to address some transportation needs for the two coastal communities (Point Arena and Manchester) and the two counties (Mendocino and Sonoma) that divide the region, to date there is no document that incorporates a regional perspective. An integrated, comprehensive and strategic approach is needed.

The purpose of the *Strategic Transportation Plan for the Redwood Coast* is to develop a strategic transportation plan for the coastal area that will fill the gaps in the present system, serve the needs of the underserved, and reflect the values of all coastal residents. The plan will also be strategically feasible so that it can be implemented.

Hence, to develop this plan, the City of Point Arena, the Manchester/Point Arena Rancheria and the Action Network requested \$85,521 from the California Department of Transportation (The Department) and contributed \$63,400 in local match. The total project cost is \$148,921.

Livable Community Concepts in the *Strategic Transportation Plan for the Redwood Coast*, include the following components:

- Improves mobility and transportation choices by looking at ways to provide residents with transportation from their homes to the MTA bus stops, so that they can have access to Santa Rosa, Ukiah, or Fort Bragg for day care, appointments, and shopping. In addition, bicyclists need safe routes and sidewalks are needed for pedestrians in town.
- Increases understanding and support for transit-oriented development and mixed-use development, such as Cyprus Village, in the town of Gualala. Cyprus Village is a mix of town homes, commercial development, including restaurants, art galleries, a fitness club, and other amenities. If there were transit service, this project would make an ideal transit hub. With sidewalk access developed, this area would be walkable, such that one could park his/her vehicle once and do all errands on foot.
- Increases the understanding among its citizens that providing affordable housing in town is a transportation issue. Many coastal jobs are not well paid. The cities and towns are home to the working poor, especially since affordable housing has not been constructed and is simply not available. Affordable housing developments are needed in town, where residents can walk or bike from home to work.

This fact sheet is one of a series describing the 2001-2002 grants. The Community-Based Transportation Planning Grant Program (CBTP) was initiated by the California Department of Transportation, Division of Transportation Planning, Office of Community Planning in 2000 to seed planning activities that encourage livable communities. CBTP grant funded projects demonstrate the value of these new approaches locally and provide best practices for statewide application. Funding is provided by 80% Federal/State and a 20% local match.

**2001-2002 Strategic Transportation Plan  
for the Redwood Coast (Continued)  
The City of Point Arena, California**

- Coordinates land use planning with transportation planning by educating citizens who understand how land use decisions impact the transportation system and vice versa. The City of Point Arena will work with the Action Network and the Manchester/Point Arena Rancheria to conduct community transportation planning processes and conduct extensive outreach with all stakeholder groups. This dynamic process will include community forums, stakeholder interviews, surveys, focus groups, and a planning charrette. A charrette is a workshop with a design team. As citizens understand the critical linkage between land use and transportation planning issues, there will be more support for good land use and transportation planning decisions.

A final strategic transportation plan will be published, distributed, and used significantly to improve transportation options and facilities in the coastal community. This plan will identify transportation policies, develop feasible timeframes, and identify potential funding sources or mechanisms to achieve the goals set forth in the plan.

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## **Transit Public Participation Plan Supports Downtown Redevelopment and More**

Incorporated in 1898, the City of Azusa evolved from a rural agricultural center in Southern California to a present day bedroom community with a strong industrial base. According to the 2000 Census, the City of Azusa's population was 44,712, with over 30 percent of the population under the age of 18. On November 14, 2001, the San Gabriel Valley Tribune editorial stated, "Azusa is the poorest foothill city in the region, in which growth and wealth are happening." As the City of Azusa enters into the second century, Azusa and its sister cities in the valley are working hard to pursue economic strategies to balance jobs and housing in the communities.

The City of Azusa, as part of its General Plan revision process, engaged nearly 1,000 community members in a process called "the Citizens Congress." This effort resulted in broad community participation in developing planning goals for Azusa and how the city relates to the rest of the San Gabriel Valley region.

Azusa's vision of its future is based on the completion of the Gold Line, a light-rail transit extension. This light-rail transit extension project will extend from Pasadena east to Claremont following the 210 (Foothill) Freeway. This corridor is 27 miles and will run through 10 cities. Most of the light-rail stations would be in redevelopment zones.

Local economic planning is based on the Gold Line's ability to provide access to the other cities of San Gabriel Valley and the entire Los Angeles County region for local businesses.

However, many parties of Azusa and its sister cities have concerns about the Gold Line extension. Residents, elected and appointed city planning officials question the benefits of this light-rail extension. While all agree that transit has an important positive effect on regional air quality, they are concerned about the effect of transit and the proposed light rail stations on

local safety, air quality, noise, economic, and residential development.

Hence, in partnership with the Southern California Transportation and Land Use Coalition (SCTLC), the City of Azusa will conduct the "*Making Regionalism a Reality: Azusa*," project. This public participation project will address concerns expressed by residents of Azusa and the other 10 cities along the Gold line extension corridor. The project goal is to educate the community about the Gold Line extension. The total cost of this public participation project is \$150,000, with the California Department of Transportation (the Department) funding \$180,000 and SCTLC and the City of Azusa contributing \$30,000.

Livable Community Concepts in the "*Making Regionalism a Reality: Azusa*," include the following components:

- Revitalizes the downtown area by encouraging transit oriented development. Over the years, the City of Azusa has invested heavily to make the downtown district more walkable and pedestrian-friendly. Furthermore, a bond measure was recently passed to fund the construction of a new state-of-the-art library in the downtown civic area. The proposed Azusa Civic Center Gold Line Station will serve as a major access point for visitors from other communities to enjoy this new library, shops, and the community life in downtown district.
- Improves jobs and housing balance by increasing the number of jobs and mix of jobs, and increases the availability of affordable housing. The proposed Azusa Civic Center Gold Line Station will be the center for increases in jobs for local residents and for those who will reach their workplace from throughout the region via the Gold Line.

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**2001-2002 Making Regionalism a Reality  
(Continued) City of Azusa, California**

- (Continued). The planning process for the new Monrovia Nursery Gold Line Station identified a neighborhood as a site for more affordable and mixed-use housing.
- Improves local mobility for Azusa residents. As proposed in the city's General Plan, a 1,000 additional new housing units are planned. Hence, a substantial investment in transit and the completion of the Gold Line extension, will help mitigate the added traffic on local streets created by additional housing. Linking the new Azusa Civic Center Gold Line Station with Azusa Transit and regional Foothill Transit will give residents greater access and mobility options in the growing City of Azusa.
- Increases residents access to regional employment, educational and health services by increasing the community awareness of the transit linkages and inter-modal opportunities that the Gold Line will provide. The project will specifically evaluate how the future light rail stations will connect with the local Azusa Transit bus routes and the regional Foothill Bus Transit bus routes. The project will also examine how the community to plan for the station's support of pedestrian and bike modes.
- Provides regional mobility by coordinating with other transportation systems in the vicinity, such as Metrolink commuter rail system and the LACMTA Metro transit system. The project will support the existing regional link between San Gabriel Valley and statewide transit through Union Station in downtown Los Angeles. The Gold Line Extension will connect the East San Gabriel Valley via rail transit all the way to El Segundo, the San Fernando Valley, the Wilshire Corridor, and eventually East Los Angeles and Whittier.

Locally, the City of Azusa will utilize information gathered by this project to develop the final project document, the Gold Line Station Area Plan. This plan can be included in Azusa's General Plan and the Civic Center Master Plan. It is projected that the Civic Center Master Plan will support a half-billion dollars in private transit oriented development and nearly 1,000 jobs. This project will also serve to initiate discussions about the Gold Line in the other 10 cities along the corridor for the proposed light rail system.

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**2001-2002 Isla Vista Multi-modal  
Transportation Plan  
Santa Barbara, California**

## **Multi-modal Plan Promotes Comprehensive Land Use Planning**

In 1959, the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) moved from the City of Santa Barbara to its current location next to Isla Vista, a coastal community of 20,000 residents. Since then both the campus and Isla Vista has experienced rapid growth. As a result, Isla Vista is one of the most densely populated communities in the United States. Sadly, it is burdened with a lack of inadequate parking, poor traffic visibility, inadequate sidewalks and minimal street amenities.

Santa Barbara County Planning and Development (SBCPD), UCSB and the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District (IVRPD) are developing a long-range Master Plan for Isla Vista though. This master plan identifies both development policies and specific projects to improve housing, infrastructure, transportation, and downtown business opportunities.

A key element of this Master Plan will be assessing multi-modal transportation options for residents. Therefore, SBCPD, UCSB, and the IVRPD requested a grant to fund the *Isla Vista Multi-modal Transportation Plan*. The total project cost is \$180,000, with the California Department of Transportation (the Department) providing \$140,000, and SBCPD, UCSB, and IVRPD providing matching funds of \$40,000.

Livable Community Concepts in the *Isla Vista Multi-modal Transportation Plan* include the following components:

- Evaluates how to improve transit connections between Isla Vista and UCSB, which can reduce automobile short distance trips and improve access to other regional transportation modes (airport, AMTRAK)

Assesses and identifies traffic calming measures to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety by reducing the number of vehicles that speed. Traffic calming measures can make streets safer, create more cohesive neighborhoods, while encouraging the community to bike or walk to local destinations.

- Examines the feasibility of bikeways and pedestrian paths, which can reduce vehicle miles driven, alleviate peak hour congestion and increase safety for all.
- Evaluates a parking permit program and a remote parking lot to alleviate parking problems downtown, increase safety, and revitalize the commercial core. Currently, downtown businesses feel that parking problems are a major factor affecting their success.
- Evaluates a mixed-use corridor along El Colegio Road, adjacent to UCSB, for safety and transportation needs, including improved access to public transportation and safe pedestrian and bicyclist facilities. Once transportation and infrastructure needs are met, this community can provide additional housing for all segments of the population.

Once final recommendations are approved by the Project Area Committee (PAC) to be incorporated into the comprehensive Master Plan for Isla Vista, UCSN, SPCPD, and IVRPD will be ready once again to carry-out livable community projects.

**For More Information:**

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## **Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan that Enhances Transit and the City's Main Street**

Over the past decade, the population of the City of Riverbank, in Stanislaus County, has exploded by over 85% to 15,826. In fact, Riverbank is now the fastest growing community in the Central Valley. The City unfortunately also has the highest unemployment rate in the county at more than 14%.

The City of Riverbank's main street and commercial corridor is State Route (SR)-108. On one side is the Downtown, while the other side holds the new commercial activity, including a regional multi-plex theatre and a regional park. On both sides of SR-108, housing, schools and other parks are also present. All destinations generate heavy traffic, which cross SR-108.

SR-108 is also a busy State Highway. SR-108 links the Sierra foothills with the floor of the Central Valley and major employers in the area. All communities along SR-108 are currently experiencing growth in population and tourism, which places even more traffic on SR-108. Unfortunately, this heavy traffic flow does not mix well with the residential, recreational, and business needs of citizens of Riverbank.

Hence, the City of Riverbank proposes the *Riverbank SR-108 Pedestrian/Bicycle Plan*. The goal of this project is to improve pedestrian and bicycle access along the SR-108 corridor. The total project cost is \$119,328, with the Department providing \$95,461 and the City of Riverbank providing matching in-kind staff resources of \$23,867

Livable Community Concepts in the *Riverbank SR-108 Pedestrian/Bicycle Enhancement Plan* include the following components:

- Assesses how to improve bicycle and pedestrian access and safety along this roadway to help address the needs of all users. SR-108 intersects the City of Riverbank's main street and is part of the town's center. As such, it is a roadway that links major activity centers and needs to respond to the requirements of drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, businesses, emergency vehicles, public utilities and others. While measures that respond to bicyclist and pedestrian's needs are often criticized, because they slow motor vehicle traffic, there are designs that can work for all users.
- Examines how to increase the use of bicycle and transit options along the SR-108 to enhance public transportation services. Stanislaus Regional Transit (StaRT) currently provides bus service, with bicycle racks, to the SR-108 Corridor and to the Stanislaus County as a whole. More residents of the region, not just those of Riverbank, will be able to bike or walk to reach bus stops, take transit, and then bike or walk again to their final destinations. This will further enable residents to travel to other regions without the use of an automobile.
- Evaluates how to support in-fill development that will help discourage sprawl on the city's perimeter, which strains the city's ability to provide services and threatens agricultural land that is key to the region's economy. Infill development also helps to reinforce the City's efforts to revitalize vacant and underutilized sites, and assists to incorporate redevelopment and infill projects into the city's Downtown revitalization plans.

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**2001-2002 Riverbank SR-108  
Pedestrian/Bicycle Enhancement Plan  
(Continued)  
City of Riverbank, California**

The *Riverbank SR-108 Pedestrian/Bicycle Enhancement Plan* will produce a final report that will articulate the community's vision for SR-108 through the following:

1. Design concept drawings and illustrations.
2. Model circulation element language to make the City's General Plan congruent with design recommendations.
3. Implementation plan with funding opportunities.
4. Inform the Department as it strives to implement a multi-modal vision for the state highway system.

For More Information:

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**2001-2002 Downtown to Waterfront  
Reconnection Project, Phase I  
City of Sacramento, California**

## **Reconnection Project Promotes Smart Growth and Tourism**

In the 1960's, Interstate 5 (I-5) was built through Downtown Sacramento, creating a 200-foot wide, 20-foot barrier between the Capitol Mall, the Crocker Art Museum district, and the waterfront area. The construction of the interstate also removed several blocks of development land and cut off access from adjacent neighborhoods to the Sacramento River. As a result, traffic congestion and vehicle noise from I-5 has made it difficult to encourage commercial development of the waterfront area.

The City of Sacramento, the California Department of Transportation (the Department), and Parsons Brickerhoff completed a preliminary technical study that examined the possibility of reconnecting the Downtown and waterfront areas over the depressed section of I-5. This study identified a number of viable options, including a bicycle/pedestrian bridge to a freeway-decking project. This study did not include public review and comment though.

Based on this finding, the Sacramento City Council directed city staff to begin the project development process, which if successful, would result in the identification, design, engineering, and construction of a project that will physically reconnect Downtown Sacramento to the waterfront area adjacent to the Sacramento River.

Hence, the City of Sacramento requested grant funds to: 1) educate the community about the transportation, design, land use, economic, and environmental issues associated with reconnecting the Downtown and waterfront area; and 2) work with local residents and community-based organizations to solicit their comments, concerns and expectations about any future reconnection project. The City requested \$300,000 from the Department, with the city providing a local match of \$75,000. The total project cost is \$375,000.

Livable Community Concepts in the *Downtown to Waterfront Reconnection Project, Phase I* include the following components:

- Extends and promotes desirable types of land use development between the Downtown area and waterfront area, and encourages local tourism and economic activity (visits to the State Capitol, the Crocker Art Museum).
- The reconnection between these areas will help promote transportation between different modes through increased pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use, enabling people to rely less on automobile travel between these different areas. Currently, most visitors to Sacramento travel to and from these attractions by automobile.
- Addresses redevelopment of in-fill areas by stimulating waterfront redevelopment and redevelopment activity to the north and west of the project areas (Union Pacific Rail yards, West Sacramento Triangle Area, Capitol Mall area).
- Supports increased residential development by complementing and providing access to the planned expansion of the CalPERS headquarters Building. A major feature of this project is the residential development of 180,000 square feet.

*The Downtown to the Waterfront Reconnection Project, Phase I* is the first step in a broader planning process that will ultimately involve the initiation of an environmental assessment, preliminary design and engineering, and completion of a California Department of Transportation Project Study Report.

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